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Book Reviews : Mark J. Cartledge: Narratives and Numbers: Empirical Studies of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity.

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Mark J. Cartledge

Narratives and Numbers: Empirical Studies of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies 24. Leiden, Brill, 2017.
Pp. x + 221. €49.00/\$68.00.

Mark J. Cartledge is Professor of Practical Theology and Director of the Center for Renewal Studies at Regent University, USA. An ordained minister in the Church of England, Cartledge has worked in overseas theological education at an Anglican seminary in Nigeria.

Cartledge's recent book is a collection of previously published essays on Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. Cartledge has been actively involved in the International Society for Empirical Research in Theology (ISERT) which is connected with the *Journal of Empirical Theology*. It is interesting to note that, even though Cartledge has served in an Anglican seminary in Nigeria and deals with important missiological topics, none of the articles have been published in missiological journals.

The focus of this new book is on the empirical study of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity from the perspective of the social sciences and theology. The main title *Narratives and Numbers* already reveals that the data of Cartledge's studies have been collected using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This is very common in practical and empirical theology and therefore I wonder why both Cartledge himself and two professors of sociology (Margaret Poloma and Michael Wilkinson) propose that this is ground breaking to the field on the back cover of the book. It is not new to practical theology or to missiology to combine empirical methods and theology in one research project or to use theories from a variety of fields. What is interesting and new in Cartledge's work is that he has developed theological and sociological theories by testing these against empirical data. He has additionally developed new ways of operationalizing concepts to re-test these theories (4). In other words, Cartledge has gone a step further than many of us theologians using various theories in our empirical studies when he developed these theories further and also tested in various ways how these theories work in a real-life context.

The topics of the book cover a wide range from prophecy via *glossolalia* to Pentecostal spirituality. The editorial to this current issue of the *Mission Studies* cited Cartledge's definition which he has fulfilled in one quite short volume. This is extremely useful for researchers in the field. This book introduces basic discussions on the central topics in the field as well as some of the central theories, both theological and sociological, behind these discussions.

The empirical studies reported in the book were conducted in various Charismatic settings, some of them being Pentecostal, others mainline

churches with Charismatic interest. Cartledge collected data from both laity and clergy. Data were collected in various settings in the UK and the USA and were thus limited to the Western sphere. According to Cartledge, the academic study of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity is hugely significant because of its undeniable influence in global societies (2). Global influence is also the reason why the recognition of research on Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity is highly relevant to missiological studies.

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